

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04

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AID-05 NEA-10 IO-13 HA-05 /078 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9531

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 5545

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, CLAT, PORC

SUBJ: VII CLAT CONVENTION

REF: STATE 28995

1. CLAT'S VII HEMISPHERIC CONGRESS WAS HELD IN SAN JOSE NOVEMBER 21-26. IT WAS REPORTEDLY MARKED BY OPEN DIVISION AMONG PARTICIPATING DELEGATES, MANY OF WHOM EXPRESSED UNHAPPINESS WITH THE POLICIES OF THE CLAT LEADERSHIP. A NEUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS REPORTEDLY INDICATED THEY WERE ATTENDING THE CONGRESS ONLY TO SEEK INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR LOCAL ISSUES SUCH AS GOVERNMENT SUPPRESSION OF THEIR ORGANIZATIONS.

2. CONGRESS INAUGURAL 21 NOVEMBER WAS POORLY ATTENDED ACCORDING TO LOCAL LABOR LEADERS AND MIN LAB OFFICIALS. APPROXIMATELY 500, FAR SHORT OF THE 800 THE ORGANIZERS EXPECTED, SHOWED UP. MINISTER OF LABOR ROJAS, THE FEATURED SPEAKER AT INAUGURAL, MERELY WELCOMED THE DELEGATES TO SAN JOSE AND WISHED THEM A SUCCESSFUL CONGRESS. ARAB WORKERS ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVE TAYEB LAHDRIHI OF EGYPT ALSO ADDRESSED GATHERING, CALLING UPON WORKERS OF THIRD WORLD TO UNITE AGAINST INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS. OTHER SPEAKERS INCLUDED CLAT SECRETARY GENERAL MASPERO AND CONGRESS PRESIDENT ALSIMIRO HERRERA, PRESIDENT OF CLAT'S LOCAL AFFILIATE, TPV COSTA RICAN WORKERS CONFEDERATION (CTC).

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3. CONVENTION DELEGATES AGREED THAT UNION SUPPRESSION BY MILITARY DICTATORSHIPS WAS PRINCIPAL PROBLEM FACING UNION MOVEMENT IN HEMISPHERE. THEY SUPPORTED RESOLUTIONS CALLING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS IN HEMISPHERE, AN END TO MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN GOVERNMENTS, AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION. AT ONE POINT MASPERO TOLD LOCAL JOURNALISTS THAT WHAT

WAS NEEDED WAS A STRENGTHENED DEMOCRATIC ACTION MOVEMENT ALIGNED WITH NEITHER LEFT NOR RIGHT WING POLITICAL PARTIES.

4. FAMILIAR CLAT TARGETS WERE ATTACKED ANEW. AFL-CIO, AIFLD AND ORIT WERE DENOUNCED BY THE CONGRESS AS "IMPERIALISTIC FORCES." THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT WAS REPEATEDLY CONDEMNED PARTICULARLY FOLLOWING GOC'S ORDERING DETENTION OF CHILEAN CLAT CONGRESS DELEGATION HEAD CARLOS FREZ. DELEGATES ALSO VOTED TO SUPPORT BELIZEAN INDEPENDENCE. CLAT ANNOUNCED TERMINATION OF CAMPAIGN SUPPORTING PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE, STATING THAT SPECIAL CAMPAIGN IS LONGER NECESSARY SINCE CLAT IS NOW "AGAINST ALL FORMS OF COLONIALISM."

5. ACCORDING TO PRESS CLAT ALSO SIGNED AN "ALLIANCE" WITH THE ARAB WORKERS ORGANIZATION TO FIGHT AGAINST THE EXPLOITATION OF THIRD WORLD RICHES AND IN FAVOR OF A NEW, MORE JUST, INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER, HUMAN RIGHTS AND UNION FREEDOMS THAT ARE VIOLATED IN MANY COUNTRIES.

6. CONGRESS REELECTED MASPERO SECRETARY GENERAL. EDUARDO GARCIA, JOSE MERCED GONZALEZ AND LUIS ENRIQUE MARIUS WERE CTCM DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERALS.

7. COMMENT: CONGRESS RECEIVED MINIMAL ATTENTION FROM GOCR, NON-CLAT UNIONS AND MEDIA. THIS WAS NOT SURPRISING AS LOCAL CLAT AFFILIATE, CTC, ONE-FIKQH SIZE OF BOTH DEMOCRATIC AND COMMUNIST CVTFEDERATIONS, IS WEAK AND NOT SIGNIFICANT FORCE ON LOCAL LABOR SCENE. COSTA
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RICANS USUALLY DO NOT PAY MUCH ATTENTION TO ITS ACTIVITIES. CONGRESS DID HAVE POSITIVE EFFECT ON N C LEADER HERRERA, HOWEVER, STRONGLY ANTI-COMMUNIST REMARKS BY MASPERO, ACCORDING TO MINISTRY OF LAZXR OFFICIAL WHO SPOKE WITH HERRERA AFTER CONGRESS, APPARENTLY SENSITIZED HERRERA TO COMMUNIST EFFORTS TO SUBVERT CTC AND UTILIZE HIM AS THEIR TOOL.
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